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SO-CALLED "RED PORCELAIN," OR BOCCARO WARE OF THE CHINESE, AND ITS IMITATIONS

The fine-grained stoneware of the Chinese potters, known by the Portuguese as Boccaro ware, was first produced in the Ming Dynasty, at Yi-Hsinghsien, near Shanghai, province of Kiangnan. It varies in color from a deep rich red to a brown or chocolate tint, and occasionally runs into buff, the deep red, however, predominating. This ware is usually decorated with relief designs, or occasionally with enamel colors. The reliefs appear to have been engraved in the mould and not applied. If they have been moulded separately, the marks of application have been so carefully removed as to defy detection. The pieces of this ware are usually very carefully potted and are of simple and elegant form, the paste being so fine-textured, homogeneous and hard that it cannot be marked with a steel point. Sometimes the decorations contain panels with backgrounds of impressed diaperwork. The Chinese Boccaro ware was extensively reproduced by certain European potters during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Examples of Chinese Boccaro ware in the Museum collection are here shown.

RED WARE OF ARY DE MILDE

Pieces of red earthenware, in imitation of the Chinese Boccaro ware, stamped with the mark of Ary de Milde (an oval medallion with the name, over the figure of a leaping fox), are found in various European museums, and by certain writers have been attributed to the Meissen factory. Johann Friedrich Böttger first began his experiments at Meissen in 1707, in search of a substitute for the red Boccaro stoneware of the Chinese potters, but it is now known that several potters in Delft, Holland, had succeeded in producing red teapots of this character more than thirty years previous to that date, and in Dutch inventories of the end of the seventeenth and beginning of the eighteenth centuries red stoneware teapots (called "Delffse Treckpottiens") are mentioned. Among the Dutch potters was Ary Jansz de Milde, who as early as 1658* was a member of the St. Lucas Guild at Delft. In

*The Keeper of the Manuscripts in the Royal Library at The Hague informs me that Arij de Milde was entered as a member of St. Lucas Guild June 11, 1658, on the payment of 6 guilders. The name is written in full, Arij Hansen de Milde. The letters ij in Dutch are equivalent to y.



"BOCCARO" WARE
Chinese
Seventeenth Century



RED WARE TEAPOTS
The first by Ary de Milde
The second probably by Lambertus Van Eenhoorn
Dutch, late Seventeenth Century

1680 Ary de Milde and Samuel van Eenhoorn (evidently in partnership) mentioned in a petition to the "Staten van Holland" that they had succeeded in imitating the "Oost-Indische theepotten" (East India teapots), and asked that all potters be required to register their marks. From this it would appear that their red ware was so superior to that of other potters that their mark—the figure of a fox running to the right—was being extensively copied. Samuel van Eenhoorn died in 1685, and it is believed that Ary de Milde then changed the mark so that the fox faced the left, the form in which it is found on pieces bearing his name alone. In 1687 Ary de Milde bought a house in Delft and was then called a Master Teapot Baker (mr. thee-potbacker). Ary de Milde died in January, 1708, at the age of seventy-four, just at the time when Böttger had succeeded in perfecting his "red porcelain" body. These facts have been brought out by Mr. A. H. H. van der Burgh, in an article published in "*Oud-Holland*" (No. 19, p. 99) in 1901. The researches of this writer would seem to establish the fact that Ary de Milde was one of the first to succeed in reproducing the much admired Oriental red ware which had found its way into the European markets.

There is in the Rijks Museum at Amsterdam a small red teapot bearing Ary de Milde's mark, and in the Hamburg Museum may be seen a second marked example of unglazed red stoneware decorated with enamel colors. A third specimen, in the collection of Mr. F. W. Phillips, of Hitchin, England, is decorated with applied reliefs in the form of Chinese dragons, and in the Johanneum Museum, Dresden, are several of de Milde's marked pieces.

The red ware of Ary de Milde differs from the red stoneware of Böttger in its hardness, as it can readily be cut into with a steel point and hence is a variety of rather hard pottery instead of true stoneware, and is not susceptible of a high polish. The relief ornaments were made in separate moulds and attached to the surface. They reveal the Chinese influence, having been copied, as a rule, from Oriental pieces.

An excellent example of de Milde's work, just procured for the Museum collection, is a teapot with relief designs, in Chinese style, bearing the mark of a fox facing the left (see illustration).

It may be of interest to note here that the word Delft is pronounced in Holland as though written in two syllables—Dél-eft.

RED WARES OF OTHER DUTCH POTTERS

Probably the first potter to succeed in reproducing the Chinese red Boccaro ware was Lambertus Cleffius, of the "Metal Pot" in Delft, who was producing red teapots in the style of the "India" ware as early as 1672. At his death in 1691, Lambertus van Eenhoorn purchased the pottery, which he continued to operate until 1721. The latter also produced red ware and used the figure of a fox as a mark. Chaffers states that L. van Eenhoorn employed as a mark a unicorn (a rebus on his name). There is in the Museum collection a Dutch teapot bearing an indistinct mark which resembles a leaping horse with arched tail and what appears to be a horn projecting from the forehead (see illustration). The name of the potter being entirely obliterated, this piece has not yet been identified. It is possible that it was made

by Lambertus van Eenhoorn after he had discontinued the use of the fox mark, as a result of the petition of Ary de Milde and Samuel van Eenhoorn.

Jacobus de Caluwe, another Delft potter, was also producing red teapots (*roode theepotten*) before the close of the seventeenth century. His mark was also a running fox facing the right. Examples of his manufacture may be seen in the Johanneum at Dresden, and in the British Museum.

There were several other potters in Delft who were making red teapots in imitation of the Chinese Boccario ware during the latter part of the seventeenth century and the first years of the eighteenth, who used their monograms as marks.

ELERS RED STONEWARE

Sometime between 1690 and 1710 two brothers, John Philip and David Elers, who are believed to have learned their trade in Holland, began the



RED STONEWARE

Teapot by the Elers Brothers, early Eighteenth Century
 Brazier, of the Elers School, late Eighteenth Century
 English

manufacture of red stoneware, in imitation of the Chinese Boccario ware, at Bradwell, near Burslem, in Staffordshire, England. Their productions bear a close resemblance to the red ware of Ary de Milde and other Dutch potters of the same period, but are denser and harder.

Elers stoneware is characterized by delicacy of form and careful potting. The pieces are usually of small size, such as teapots, mugs and cups, and are embellished with reliefs, formed by placing bats of plastic clay on the surface and stamping them on with little moulds, the outlines of the edges of the moulds being usually visible. In this respect their method was similar

to that of the Dutch potters. The color of the genuine Elers ware, which is exceedingly hard, is a rather pale red. Many contemporary imitators (among whom were Twyford and Astbury, who, by pretending to be idiots, gained admittance to the Elers pottery where they learned the secrets of the manufacture) soon sprang up and some of their work so closely resembles the Elers ware that it is often difficult to distinguish the one from the other. Elers ware possesses no glaze but has a smooth, velvety surface. It was never polished on the lapidary's wheel as was one variety of Böttger's stoneware.

We have seen large tea kettles, braziers and other forms of red stoneware in museums and private collections, labeled Elers, but while such pieces may be desirable, they more properly come under the head of the Elers school, and are probably of a somewhat later date. They often bear imitation Chinese marks. Some of the best Elers pieces are marked with simulated Chinese square devices, impressed in the paste.

In the accompanying illustration an Elers teapot, procured in England last summer, is shown, together with a brazier, of the Elers school. The relief motives on the teapot consist of squirrels, flowers and scrollwork.

BÖTTGER "RED PORCELAIN"

Johann Friedrich Böttger began experimenting at Meissen, in the first years of the eighteenth century, with a view to discovering the method of producing the vitreous, red Boccero ware which had recently been brought to Europe. Whether Böttger was aware of the achievements of the Dutch potters in the same direction is uncertain, but it is probable that he conducted his experiments independently, arriving at the same results in the very year of Ary de Milde's death. In 1708, he succeeded in perfecting a body which closely resembled the Oriental and which he named, on account of its hard and vitreous nature, "red porcelain." From that time until about 1719, he produced large quantities of this ware, in close imitation of Chinese forms, such as teapots, with square, bucket handles, in imitation of basket work; bottle-shaped teapots with dragon head spouts; rectangular teapots; tea jars of octagonal form; figures of Chinese divinities; cups and saucers; candlesticks; bottles; vases; busts; figurines; modeled plaques, and drinking steins. Many of the European museums contain examples of Böttger's work, but the most important and extensive group is to be seen in the Johanneum Museum, of Dresden.

The color of the Böttger stoneware varies considerably. One variety is olive brown, or tea brown, and there are different shades of red, all of these tints being produced by different degrees of heat in the firing. The ware is exceedingly hard, but the reliefs are not so sharp as those of the Chinese potters.

There are four distinct varieties of Böttger ware, as follows:

1. Unglazed, with relief designs.
2. Unglazed, but highly polished on the lapidary's wheel.
3. Unglazed, with decorations painted in enamel colors.
4. Glazed, brownish black in tint, with intaglio carving, or gold designs.

Other examples have unpolished intaglio decorations, carved in a polished ground. The relief designs have apparently been cut in the moulds and cast in one piece, except in some of the larger specimens, which have modeled parts separately applied. The motives most frequently found among Böttger's reliefs are hawthorn flowers, acanthus leaves, masks and foliated ornaments.

Genuine Böttger pieces are frequently marked with impressed devices rudely simulating Chinese stamps. These sometimes occur on the unglazed



RED STONEWARE

By Johann Friedrich Böttger
Meissen, Germany, 1709-1719

bases of bottles, teapots and other pieces. Böttger's red stoneware is a closer imitation of the Chinese ware than that of any of the other imitators, being characterized by elegance of form, careful potting and accuracy of detail in the relief ornaments.

Three excellent examples of Böttger "red porcelain," recently added to the Museum collection, are here figured. They consist of a bottle-shaped teapot, a hexagonal tea caddy and a plain tea cup. The first two pieces are close imitations of Chinese shapes.

BAYREUTH RED POTTERY

In the eighteenth century, imitations of the red stoneware of Böttger were produced at Bayreuth, Bavaria. This ware was made of bright red clay, burned tolerably hard and covered with a rich chocolate brown glaze, over which gold or silver decorations were placed. This ware was evidently made to imitate that variety of Böttger ware which was covered with a brilliant brown glaze or lacquer, and decorated in gold. The metallic decoration of the Bayreuth red pottery has been applied solidly (in silhouette) and the



BROWN GLAZED RED POTTERY
Gold and Silver Decorations
Bayreuth, Germany, Eighteenth Century

details have been brought out by incised lines. The silver is often tarnished but can be made bright by rubbing with a knife blade.

Since the Bayreuth ware is frequently sold for Böttger ware, and is sometimes so labeled in public museums, it is important that collectors should learn to discriminate between them. The principal point of difference is in the relative hardness. Böttger stoneware is so dense that it cannot be marked with steel, but the red pottery of Bayreuth can be scraped away with a knife point or cut on the thin edges with a blade. The Böttger ware of the same character possesses a heavier, richer and more brilliant glaze. E. A. B.